

# Christianity and Crisis

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## The Modern Sinner

IT IS sometimes said that modern men are not conscious of being sinners and that proclamation of the forgiveness of sins is therefore ineffectual. A congregation may join in the general confession that they have done those things which they ought not to have done and left undone those things which they ought to have done, but there is often a sense of unreality about the acknowledgment. This lameness of the formulas of penitence is worthy of attention, especially since so many revised orders of service today place this action at the beginning of worship.

The element of unreality in confession is not necessarily a sign of hardheartedness and complacency. It is rather that men are more dominated by a sense of being caught in a sinful situation than of being heinously guilty of particular sins. They are aware of a corporate sinfulness or guilt, and very conscious of an iron necessity that appears to rule here. The secular version of this situation is the irresponsible thesis that no one can be blamed for anything since we are all the victims of circumstances. The modern tragic hero is called the pathetic hero because his fall is determined not by responsibility and retribution but by heredity and environment. There are no more villains in life or in literature since the evil doer cannot help himself. The villain survives only in melodrama and "westerns" by a kind of convention that no one takes seriously. Jane Addams once countered this whole view by insisting that a man near Hull House who was selling drugs to children was, nevertheless, a real villain.

Now a concern with Sin rather with sins, a deep sense of corporate wrong, can well be a favorable sign. The emphasis on the offenses of the individual alone belongs to an individualistic and paternalist order and such offenses are too often associated chiefly with vices and faults which are far from covering the main impulses of self-aggrandizement and rebellion against God. It is significant that the Lord's Prayer speaks of "our debts" (incidentally a more adequate term in this light than "trespasses" which lays emphasis on the particular deeds rather

than the common short-coming), and that "our debts" are immediately related in the prayer to the tyranny of evil.

Contemporary literature illustrates in many ways our point that modern man is deeply conscious of corporate guilt and of a sense of bondage in which he feels himself both helpless and responsible. Certain avowals in this tenor in Eliot's *The Family Reunion* and *The Cocktail Party* represent high points in the plays. The characters recognize that they have done wrong, but the interest lies in the larger web which conditioned the offenses and the forgiveness of the individual is linked up with the redemption of the family as a whole or of all the relationships involved. The modern sinner is not so aware of his freedom as the sinner, say, of *Poor Richard's Almanac* or of Hawthorne, or as Saul Kane, the village wastrel of Masefield's *Everlasting Mercy*. He is in bondage to principalities and powers of evil, to formidable tyrants of the age, whose sway extends over the whole way of life, over institutions and orders, over social attitudes and habits and valuations. His compunction takes the form of a bitter sense of being an accomplice, of complicity, of connivance. His mood is an alternation of self-reproach, capitulation, revolt, reprobation. Occasional glimpses of a possible innocence suggested perhaps in great art or in certain aspects of nature provoke an all but intolerable anguish. Thus Clytemnestra speaks in William Alfred's play, *Agamemnon*:<sup>1</sup>

The picture in my mind of what I was  
Had, I don't know, grown dingy, I suppose . . .  
As if I had been crying in my dreams  
All night on shuttered streets half-lit with stars,  
Because I was a partner in some wrong,  
In some default of faith too base for words;  
And waking hoarse, should find the world I left  
Swept still by clean-cut winds and cleansing light,  
But somehow find it as a pauper child  
Must find a trinket it can never own,  
Heart-breaking in its beauty—Punished . . .

<sup>1</sup> New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954, pp. 35-36. Used by permission of the publisher.

To this mood the Gospel can speak even more effectively than to the older constellation of the individual convicted by conscience for his vices and violences or his transgressions of the law. The New Testament's symbolism of the reign of Satan and of the sway of principalities and powers, the spiritual rulers of this age, comes into its own. For sin is here seen in its aspect of corporate and even cosmic bondage and redemption is seen in its aspect of world emancipation. The modern man sees himself not as Promethean rebel or self-accusing scapegrace but as a relatively helpless and wistful prisoner in a system of huge social and cultural authorities and compulsions. In addressing him the Christian faith must make its true claim not only over the conscience of the individual but over the false tyrants of the age, over the whole of life. Thus the forgiveness of sins takes its true place in the context of Christ's wider victory. For through him and his cross God "disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them."

A.N.W.

### EDITORIAL NOTES

The London agreements which incorporated Germany into the Western defense community, which granted her sovereignty and permitted her rearming is one of the few bright chapter endings in the recent history of the free nations. It had been preceded by the death of the EDC in the French National Assembly. The demise of this promising venture in super-national sovereignty seemed at the time to be catastrophic. Actually it was but the prelude to a more viable kind of international cooperation, including all the west-European nations and demanding, not explicit abridgment of sovereignty by any of them, though very close cooperation. This is just another case in which the more "organic" process of implicit abridgment of sovereignty proved to be more viable than an explicit renunciation of sovereignty. The latter is probably an achievement beyond the moral competence of any nation. But the results of the London Conference prove that this defect need not prompt us to despair as long as nations can attain forms of common action which allow the slow development of community.

The Russians, conscious of the intense German desire for union of a divided nation are belatedly offering the prospect of such a union through a "four power conference." But they are probably too late to beguile any of the nations involved in the new agreement. Furthermore the Berlin Conference of a year ago conclusively proved that German union and neutralization, of a kind which the

Russians would approve, would mean a Germany exposed to Russian power and intrigue. Thus it is almost a foregone conclusion that the London agreement will be ratified by the several parliaments and that the Atlantic community will be more thoroughly integrated.

The exigencies of a political campaign made it almost inevitable that the administration should claim credit for this achievement. It was the first good news on the international scene after many poor tidings. Actually, through no fault of our own, we had very little to do with the achievement. Through the fault of both Democratic and Republican administrations we had committed ourselves too heavily to the EDC plan and in that sense our influence was discredited. But even without any American mistakes, the credit for the achievement belongs to the British and Anthony Eden, who pledged to maintain British divisions on the continent as long as desired, and to Mendes France, whose forthright actions contributed to this new plan, and to the Germans and to Chancellor Adenauer who took considerable risks in yielding to France on the question of the Saar and accepting conditions which Mendes France made into the prerequisite of any general settlement of Franco-German relations.

Except on our political scene, the relative credit of the various nations and statesmen is not as important as the fact that a milestone has been turned in the path toward the unity of the free nations.

R.N.

## Church News and Notes

### Union Plans for Canada

Sackville, N. B. (EPS)—Formulation of a plan for union with the Church of England in Canada was approved by the General Council of the United Church of Canada at its biennial meeting. The adopted resolution recommended that the union committees of both churches "devise a plan formulating the ideal of a reunited Church." It was suggested that the plan then be submitted to the individual churches of both denominations for consideration and study "as the concrete objective to which we strive." Should a merger eventually be consummated it will create a new church with a membership of nearly 5,000,000. The United Church has 2,850,000 communicants and the Church of England about 2,000,000.

The merger issue has been before both churches since 1943 when the Church of England in Canada, implementing a proposal by the late Archbishop Derwyn T. Owen, invited other communions for reunion talks.

Dr. Harold Young, chairman of the United Church's  
(Continued on page 150)

# The Responsible Society\*

DR. C. L. PATIJN

IN introducing to you the work of the Third Section of the Assembly, the section on the "Responsible Society," I need hardly remind you of the fact that expectations regarding the results of this Conference are pitched high. We know for certain that many Christians expect a statement which will guide them in the complexity and cruelty of modern society. They want the Church to come out and speak to the world in simple terms, with complete knowledge and superior wisdom. It is deeply disturbing to see so many people waiting for the manifestation of the children of God at Evanston. The height of these expectations equals the depth of the gap which separates modern political and social life from the life of the Church. I believe that some churchmen are not yet fully aware of the extent of that gap, while others who have looked into the abyss despair of the chances of any human control of and spiritual impact upon society.

We are faced with the accomplished fact that in the industrial revolution economic activity emancipated itself from previous social and spiritual controls and outgrew its modest place in human life. In the no man's land of modern culture outside the sphere of influence of the Church and traditional morality arose the vast network of commercial and industrial relations of financial capitalism and at the same time the new phenomenon of an increasingly powerful State. I need not stress the importance of this sector of human life, especially for the layman, a sector where the word of the Church is certainly not the light of the world and only occasionally a lamp unto the feet. It is a matter of life and death for our generation whether the Church will be able to permeate this political and social sector of the life of mankind, or whether it will be unable to do so and will remain at the other side of the gap over against the bad world, throwing an occasional stone or yielding to all sorts of escapism.

All that has been said and published on social affairs by the ecumenical movement and individual churches in the last few decades . . . cannot alter the fact that we are still just beginning to elaborate a new social ethos, which will be truly Christian and truly relevant to modern society.

When the churches were gathered together for the first time in a great ecumenical conference at Stockholm in 1925, it was at the same time a re-encounter between the Church and World after three centuries of pietism. The Conference was the first major

attempt to draw the churches together in a united effort of social renewal. From that moment on the ecumenical movement, in its aspect of "Life and Work," has taken the lead in studying the implications of the Christian concern for social and political affairs. In this work the ecumenical movement was ahead of most of the individual churches and gradually gained an increasing influence on the social thinking of the Christian world. Nevertheless the start was difficult. In the first few years of ecumenical discussion the churches sometimes gave the impression of having been nearer to the angels than to the facts of communal life. Not only did the Stockholm Conference stress the supreme value of the soul in the sphere of economics—a word which gradually disappears from ecumenical publications—but at the same time Stockholm defined the position of the Church in public life in the following curious words: "The mission of the Church is above all to state principles, and to assert the ideal, while leaving to individual consciences, and to communities, the duty of applying them with charity, wisdom and courage." A heavy burden indeed for the individual conscience, since the principles were too general and simple, and society too stubborn and complicated to make the application of this rule an easy task for any layman.

The Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council in 1928 formulated some criteria by which the Christian could test the social and economic system. As at Stockholm those criteria were still extremely elementary and clearly hostile towards the essentials of economic activity. This Conference raised its voice against the validity of individual profit and the profit motive itself. In doing so the Jerusalem Conference confined itself to putting some question marks in the margin of society, with one notable exception. With regard to some problems of the undeveloped areas the Conference listed a number of points, which were far more explicit and realistic than anything that had been suggested before. As in other instances, new ideas and realistic wisdom came to the Church first from the mission field.

In one of the following years, 1930, a group of Christian social workers considered the elaboration of a detailed scheme for a Christian sociology as an instrument for the regulation of the political and social life of mankind. It is interesting to note in the history of ecumenical thinking regarding society at least one serious attempt to tame the wilderness of social and political relations with the concept of natural law. This idea, however, has apparently been abandoned. Society will never be impressed by

\* The speech of Dr. Patijn before the plenary session of the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches on August 18, 1954. Dr. Patijn, Chairman of Section III, is a member of the Dutch Delegation to the United Nations.



legalistic propositions of justice, without living relevance to the specific needs of social life.

In the darkening scene of the thirties the work and thinking of the churches in the social and political field became far more comprehensive and interesting. In the years which preceded the Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State, society was profoundly affected by the economic depression and the rise of national-socialism. Millions of unemployed lived in our cities starving in a world of plenty, while the fall of prices of primary products shook the foundations of communal life in Asia and elsewhere. At the same time Christian civilization itself seemed to succumb to a barbarism of unprecedented violence in the centre of Europe. The Oxford Conference of 1937, more than its predecessors, stood under the immediate impact of history which led the churches to some clear and forthright statements. In the course of the following years, after war had broken out, the findings of the Oxford Conference sank in and deeply influenced the social and political thinking and teaching of the Church. Oxford was a shining light in the darkness of world conflict.

Even today the more general and introductory parts of the Oxford Conference Report—one could call them the prolegomena to social ethics—are fully relevant to our work here and in many respects far ahead of the actual social thinking of the churches. For the first time it was stated in no uncertain terms that economic activities stand under the judgment of Christ, that there are points at which the Christian understanding of life is challenged by the assumptions and operations of the economic order, that Christians are bound to require the economic system to present its credentials and to examine them in the light of Christian doctrine as to the nature of God and man. The sins of economic life were listed, points for Christian teaching in relation to the economic order were stated and methods for Christian action were indicated. What seems especially important is that the churches no longer held back from society, but on the contrary proceeded to the attack in stating that, in so far as the credentials of the economic system were unsatisfactory, Christians were bound to use every effort to amend or to supersede it.

In retrospect one can say that the Oxford Conference laid the foundation for a new Christian social ethos and largely determined the trend of Christian thinking in the following years. At the same time it is now possible to see more clearly some shortcomings. The Oxford report formulated a number of long-range goals in the social-economic field without any indication as to the way in which such ends could be attained. The concrete economic problems of society were not judged on their own merits, but submitted to the test of principles and

standards which often seem rather meaningless to those standing in the midst of the ambiguities of social life. Oxford was far more explicit in proclaiming the desirable than in indicating how the undesirable could be checked. It was a tremendous step forward in Christian thinking, but the statements regarding the economic order were to a certain extent still remote from the battlefields. They bore witness to great academic reflection, but did not always breathe the atmosphere of active wrestling with actual problems in social and political life.

So far I have been speaking largely of past history in ecumenical thinking. I now come to the more recent statements of the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1948. In the years preceding the Amsterdam Assembly a shift in emphasis with regard to society appeared in ecumenical thinking, which I must mention here. For many years the ecumenical movement had stressed the dangers of economic life for the soul and the dignity of man and indicated some general tendencies which were listed as social sins. Now for the first time, in the preparatory studies for the Amsterdam Assembly, an attempt was made to give a cohesive appraisal of our technical civilization in its complexity and intractability. Society no longer appeared under a moral aspect only. This time its essence was questioned. Out of some analytical studies appeared a far more profound picture of society than in previous ecumenical thinking. It was the picture of a technical civilization of things, of forces and powers which man has called into being, but which now dominate him as a second nature, a second nature in many respects far more hostile towards mankind than original nature itself.

Against this background of a robot-like civilization, which threatens mankind in its spiritual, social and political freedom, the Amsterdam Assembly attempted to present an equally comprehensive word, which could serve as a rallying point and a battle-cry, the word "responsible society." I may dwell a moment on this word, which was paraphrased in his preparatory work for Amsterdam by Dr. J. H. Oldham, the man who has rendered such outstanding service to the ecumenical movement and to whom I may pay tribute at this moment. He was aware of the necessity to find a slogan which would go right down to the heart of the matter.

The Amsterdam Assembly used the word "responsible society" in a double sense. It was used first to indicate its concern for the adequate protection in economic and political life of the economically weak, the social victims of the new technical age, the unemployed, the refugees, the underdeveloped areas of the world, the peoples of low living standards, the oppressed and the persecuted, all those who need help in order to be freed from want and fear. At the same time the word "responsible so-

ciety" sought to express the churches' concern for a social order which provides democratic ways of living for "little men in big societies," which does not regard man as a cog in a machine, but as a free and responsible person, able to act responsibly in social, political and private life. The implications of this fundamental conception of a responsible society were stated in the Amsterdam report in broad outline only. It will be one of our tasks here to enter into further details in order to strengthen the impact of these basic truths on society.

One other basic feature of the Amsterdam report has clearly influenced Christian thinking in the last few years. The report proclaimed the independence of the Church with regard to structures of political and economic life. The Church's conception of justice transcends history. Therefore the Church itself transcends systems. Accordingly the Amsterdam report was critical of both communism and laissez-faire capitalism, while seeking to draw the churches away from the false assumption that in society there was no alternative to their ideologies.

Looking back at the Amsterdam report, many people have told us that some of the main points have gone to the very roots of the matter. The Church which tends to be either too pietistic or too philosophical, was neither the one nor the other in its statement regarding the responsible society. One can say, I believe, that as a starting point for further study the statement is adequate. One criticism of the Amsterdam report, however, has greatly concerned those of us who were involved in the study preparations for this Assembly in Evanston. An American commentator stated that the Amsterdam Conference, in considering the moral and spiritual aspects of economic problems, was significant, "but more in terms of general attitudes than specific issues." Some of us felt that this was true and that we were therefore presented with a challenge. This challenge is now before us here at Evanston. We must express our concern for the situation in political and economic life not in general terms, not in the language of encyclical letters, but in words which will hit home with regard to specific issues. The reports of the ecumenical conferences of Oxford and Amsterdam have paved the way with a number of valuable pronouncements of a general character which will be our stepping stones here. But we are obliged to go ahead and to cross the borderline from the general to the specific, from the clergy to the laity, from the ideal to the existential, from academic reflection to the actual struggle for justice in society, from ethics to the daily round in which faith, hope and love are burning faintly. Only in doing so will the Church get the problem of society within its grasp.

I will not burden your capacity for listening with an enumeration of all the new points which have

arisen in the preparations for this Assembly. I will indicate only in a few words the trend of the last study-report, which was prepared for the benefit of Section III of this Conference, so far as this trend is different from the Amsterdam report. It appears that ecumenical thinking at the moment is less negative towards our technical society and the economic process than at previous ecumenical conferences. There is more interest in the problems of production and efficiency than before. At the same time it is more generally accepted that the state has an important part to play in economic life, although the extent of state intervention is still a controversial point. Since there is also a better understanding of the significance of private initiative and the dangers of centralization and rigidity in the economic system, it seems as though the old controversy between socialism and capitalism is beginning to lose its sting. Some more specific issues will take a great deal of our attention, especially the urgent question of the underdeveloped areas of the world and the problem of communism.

The analytical parts of the documents studied which have been prepared for Section III of this Conference present the Church with a number of concrete issues which enable it to give social and political life a closer examination than ever before. It is a long way indeed from the mere concern for the soul and the moral person of Stockholm, via the scientific prolegomena of Oxford to the realistic appraisal of conditions in society which will be our task here.

Will we be able to state something which will be both Christian and relevant? We have some reason for hesitation in answering that question, especially the first part of it. I must be very frank here. Those of us who live in the Western world sometimes wonder whether statements regarding political matters by people representing churches in Eastern Europe do not reflect more the political environment in which they are living than the Gospel which they claim to interpret. But I am convinced that our brethren from those churches will have exactly the same misgivings with regard to our statements. This gives us reason for great humility and must be for the Church, which is called to transcend history, a matter of constant self-examination. If the churches at this Conference are able to make a truly Christian common witness regarding social and political problems, it will be only by the grace of God. For with men it sometimes seems impossible.

The second part of the question, whether we will be able to make a truly relevant statement, is less formidable than the first part, but it will still be difficult enough to live up to its challenge. The preparatory documents, however, give us a good start. We may be able to make a statement which serves the purpose if we succeed in speaking in

positive and not in negative terms. By this I mean that we should keep in mind two points, which in my view are of basic importance for any statement of the Church with regard to social affairs. These points are the following.

First the Church should see the dangers and sins of society not as an object for mere criticism but as an object for responsible action. The freedom, which is the key-word in the Amsterdam definition of a responsible society, is no negative concept. Freedom from want and freedom from fear are not identical with freedom from making a united effort, and for that reason they are not identical with freedom from all state intervention. For the German refugee, for the Italian unemployed, for the Asian small tenant farmer and for the Navajo Indian in his American reservation, only a negative concept of freedom would be a freedom to starve. Therefore freedom in a responsible society is not neces-

sarily a freedom of non-intervention, but a God-given opportunity for responsible action.

Finally, the Church should base its word with regard to society not on fear, but on hope. The real service which the Church can render is to understand society better than it understands itself. It is for the Church to deliver society from the dangerous illusions of utopianism and to loosen the fetters of political dogma. It is for the Church to save mankind from the numerous frustrations which arise where men are bound to their own past social structures or political forms of idolatry. It is for the Church to set man free from the despair which will sooner or later befall him as long as he believes himself able to shoulder the burden of this world. It is for the Church to give power, motivation and courage for Christian action in society by proclaiming that God reigns and that we are called to participate in his ministry or reconciliation.

## The World Church News and Notes

(Continued from page 146)

Commission on Union, summed up the current status of these negotiations. "We have done everything possible to increase fellowship and understanding. Ten years ago we met as strangers; today we meet as friends with a fine spirit and understanding. There are no issues on which members may not hope to find a way. Both churches are definitely committed to organic union as our aim. We talked of cooperation. But now we are committed to organic union as the goal."

### Churches Fight Segregation

A spot check by *Religious Newsweekly* shows cooperative church efforts making important contributions to peaceable solution of disputes over racially integrated education. From at least three trouble spots came news of Protestant leadership. Some of the highlights were:

**Washington, D. C.:** In the nation's capital twenty clergymen, buttressed by squadrons of police, took positions at a strategic point and successfully dispersed a crowd of three to four hundred teen-agers swarming up Pennsylvania Ave., towards the Supreme Court. The following day clergymen and school officials met with more than 400 students in a mass meeting organized by student forces to protest integration. After listening to a series of twelve student "gripes," the clergy reasoned with them to try to make the necessary adjustment. Many, it was reported, returned to school. In less dramatic, but equally effective ways, the Washington Federation of Churches was also carrying on a behind-the-scenes fight against segregation. Federation executives were in almost constant conference with school officials. And in every trouble area clergymen were frequent visitors to the schools. At the week's end the situation was reported normal.

**Baltimore, Maryland:** Clergymen in the metropolitan area, where 2,000 students had demonstrated against integration, responded en force to a message from the

Council of Churches of Maryland and Delaware, Inc., calling upon them to work with local school officials in getting youngsters back to school and preventing violence. The anti-segregation forces won a major victory when they turned up two seventy-year old laws still on the city's books making it unlawful to induce a child to illegally absent himself from school or to picket a school. Church Council leaders in close touch with the local situation reported almost 100 per cent cooperation of local pastors in response to a Council letter asking assistance to local school officials in carrying out the Supreme Court decision. With the situation in hand, at present, the Council also was making long range plans for a state-wide integration education program.

**Milford, Delaware:** Here where pro-segregation forces were most active, the efforts of state church leaders were meeting with less success. At Milford a new school board, created under a plan worked out at conferences with the Governor, announced it was rescinding an order by the previous board, which had resigned, integrating eleven Negro pupils into a local high school. Shortly before the Wilmington and New Castle County Council of Churches and the Peninsula Methodist Conference issued a joint statement supporting clergy who had spoken freely from their pulpits against citizen opposition to integration. At the week's end schools were still segregated.

Meanwhile, in response to a suggestion by the National Council of Churches, leaders of its 30 member denominations, wrote to their local clergymen in the trouble spots urging their continued support of the integration program.

### Atlanta Baptists Oppose 'Private School Amendment'

Atlanta, Ga. (RNS)—The Atlanta Association of Baptist Churches opposed the proposed Georgia "private school amendment," as tending toward "a violation



of the sacred principle of separation of Church and State."

Georgians voted on the measure November 2. It proposes to abolish publish schools in the event that an end to segregation is ordered in Georgia and to set up a system of private schools.

The Baptist leaders declared in a resolution that "the amendment does not refer to or define what type schools are anticipated. It seems to us that children who attend denominationally-connected schools would be eligible for public funds."

The resolution was passed unanimously at the association's 46th annual convention. The group represents 133 white Baptist churches in the area.

Previously, the Methodist Ministers Association of Greater Atlanta also opposed the amendment. They said its passage "would be interpreted as approval of an idea which we deem to be radical, revolutionary and destructive of a precious heritage, and of the welfare of our children, youth and adults."

### **WCC Sends Statement to Moscow Patriarchate**

Two leading representatives of the World Council of Churches called recently on Archbishop Boris of the Russian Orthodox Church in Berlin and gave him an official document on the international situation to be transmitted to the Patriarchate of Moscow.

The churchmen who delivered the message were Bishop Otto Diebelius of Berlin as a president of the World Council of Churches, and Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, the General Secretary of the organization.

Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, pointed out, at his office in New York recently, that the presentation of this document was in pursuit of a resolution adopted from the floor of the World Council Assembly during their meeting in Evanston, Illinois, in August, following the report of the Assembly Section on International Affairs.

The new Central Committee invited three churchmen to accept responsibility for transmission of the document to the churches: Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, Chairman of the Central Committee, Dr. G. K. A. Bell, an honorary President of the World Council of Churches, and Dr. Visser 't Hooft.

The resolution appealed "to the governments and the peoples" to help in the relief of present world tensions in several ways. It said:

"We appeal to the statesmen and the leaders of public opinion and the press to refrain from words and actions which are designed to inflame enmity and hatred.

"We appeal to the representatives of the churches in those countries between which tension exists to visit one another, so that they may gain a better understanding of one another, and of the countries in which they live, and thus strengthen the bonds of fellowship, and promote the reconciliation of the nations.

"We appeal to the churches to bid their members recognize their political responsibilities, and also to ask Christian technicians and administrators to find

a vocation in the service of U.N. agencies engaged in meeting the needs of economically and technically under-developed countries, thus bringing a Christian temper of love and understanding to bear upon the immensely difficult task of mutual assistance in the encounter of different cultures.

"We appeal to all members of all churches to unite in a common ministry of reconciliation in proclaiming Christ as the Hope of the World, in intercession for one another and in mutual service.

"Finally, we call upon all Christians everywhere to join in prayer to Almighty God, that He will guide the governments and the peoples in the ways of justice and peace."

Dr. Fry, Bishop Bell and Dr. Visser 't Hooft were constituted a delegation "to communicate the foregoing statement to the member churches of the World Council of Churches, to take such steps as seem most suitable with a view to the presentation of the same statement to the churches not related to the World Council of Churches, including the churches in U.S.S.R. and in other lands, to invite these churches to consider ways in which they might communicate the statement to the governments of their countries."

In a separate resolution, the Assembly also recorded its "concern and sorrow over the continuing sufferings and disabilities of fellow-Christians in many parts of the world," and deplored the fact that the World Council "cannot communicate with many churches over whose life and testimony a veil of silence has been forcibly drawn."

In accordance with the directives of the Assembly and the Central Committee, the appeal concerning the international situation has now been sent to all member churches of the Council and to a number of churches which are not members.

At the suggestion of Bishop Diebelius, he and Dr. Visser 't Hooft visited Archbishop Boris in Berlin and through him transmitted the appeal to the Patriarchate of Moscow.

In making this visit on October 18, the churchmen stressed the desire of the Assembly to contribute to the establishment of peaceful conditions and gave Archbishop Boris the appeal together with the report of the Section on International Affairs of the Assembly and the accompanying resolutions.

They reported that Archbishop Boris expressed his gratitude for the visit and promised to transmit the Evanston documents to the Patriarch of Moscow.

### **Assembly Echos From Moscow**

Geneva (EPS) — Prof. A. Wedernikow, in the *Journal Moskovskoi Patriachii* (August), a paper published by the Moscow Patriarchate, continuing under the title "Between Fear and Hope" its series of articles on the ecumenical question, which began last January: "The ecumenical movement bears the stamp of every type of Protestantism and has passed through various phases. The first phase was the effort to achieve Christian unity, which sprang from the divisions within Christendom (from about 1914-1937). In the second phase the ecumenical movement was overshadowed by the fear of Bolshevism, which gave it

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an increasingly social-political ("reactionary") bias (from about 1925 on). In the third phase the fear of communist world revolution was replaced by "fear of universal destruction through atomic warfare." In the midst of this "fear" of threatening chaos, the hope of the Coming Christ gained new significance. The eschaton was re-discovered as the only force which could bring about the unity of Christendom and the salvation of the world. . . .

"Within the whole compass of the ecumenical movement, the outstanding fact, both with regard to its composition and to its inherent possibilities, is the increasingly ecclesiastical character of those who cooperate in it, and the fact that they are concerned for the unity of the Christian Church in its fulness and in its tasks. We Orthodox Christians must therefore not only follow closely the development of the ecumenical movement: we must also give our church's answer to its aims and to its thinking."

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## National Council to Meet

New York, N. Y. (News)—Four years ago American churches translated into reality the dream of establishing a cooperative church program representative of every phase of the churches' ministry at home and abroad.

Vowing their intention to carry out their work in common spirit and purpose the churches began a new era in Christian unity when in 1950 delegates of 29 Protestant and Eastern Orthodox communions met in Cleveland, O., to consolidate the work of 12 interdenominated agencies in the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.

How successful has been the Council in fulfilling the plans blueprinted by its founders will be assessed by 2,500 church leaders, including 650 voting representatives of the Council's now 30 member communions, when they meet in Boston, Nov. 28-Dec. 3 for the week-long third General Assembly. All seven plenary sessions scheduled, with the exception of the two on Friday, Dec. 3, will be held at the Hotel Statler. The final sessions will be held at Old South Church.

The nation's most representative Christian gathering—both from the geographical and denominational standpoint—the Assembly delegates will represent a constituency with a combined membership of more than 35,500,000.

## CHRISTMAS GIFTS

This year, as previously, we are offering NEW Christmas Gift Subscriptions for \$2.00 per year. We send a nice card, with your name written in, telling of your gift. We hope that you will use this means of doing your Christmas shopping in a quick, economical—yet appreciated way. Every other week throughout the year your Christmas Gift will arrive—reminding the recipient of your thoughtfulness.

Send the names and addresses of those whom you wish to remember, BEING SURE TO TELL US EXACTLY HOW YOU WISH THE CARD TO BE SIGNED, also giving us your name and address. Use the enclosed blank.

Note: this special rate is for *new* subscriptions only.

## Sustaining Fund

We are happy to report that our readers made a very generous response to our first appeal for contributions to our annual deficit. A total of \$854.00 was subscribed. This generosity encourages us to hope that the entire deficit will be covered. We are most grateful to our friends and we hope that additional contributions will soon assure the continued life of our journal. Incidentally, all expenses are used for publishing costs. There are no editorial salaries or honoraria for articles.

The Editors